

Congressman Jesse Jackson Jr. today applauded the State of Illinois for finally submitting a proposed South Suburban Airport layout plan to the Federal Aviation Administration. The State's submission contains five alternatives, including three from the Abraham Lincoln National Airport Commission (ALNAC).

"We've waited a long time for this, but the fate of the third airport is now in the hands of the FAA," Jackson said.

"I am confident the FAA, after reviewing all the plans, will select ALNAC's as the safest, most commercially viable, and most environmentally friendly alternative. We also believe the FAA will favor ALNAC's proposal to finance the airport with private dollars, not taxpayers' dollars."

Jackson noted that all five plans sent to the FAA were variations of ALNAC's original concept, which the State endorsed in 2005.

While the State on Friday designated its own variation of ALNAC's original plan as the "preferred" plan, Governor Blagojevich authorized ALNAC to submit detailed background information on ALNAC's other alternatives to the FAA to supplement the State's submission. ALNAC filed those detailed plans with the FAA Friday.

One major difference is ALNAC's plans call for only three runways in the ultimate build out; IDOT seeks four runways.

"Three runways handle enough capacity for at least 50 years. ALNAC downsized the ultimate airport to reduce future impacts on nearby communities," Jackson said. "We've waited a long time for this, but the fate of the third airport is now in the hands of the FAA," Jackson said.